

# Baptism.

*Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved...*

Mark 16:15-16

**If you are thinking about getting baptised, these notes will help you to fully understand both the significance of the event and the practicalities involved in the service.**

If, having read this, you would like to get baptised, please drop us a line via the form at [centralvineyard.co.uk/baptism](http://centralvineyard.co.uk/baptism) and a member of the team will be in touch.



## Who can get baptised?

Baptism is an outward sign of an inward truth: that we have died to our old life and decided to trust and follow Jesus. Faith is an invisible, intangible thing that needs to be expressed in action. We can show people what they cannot see: that our faith is in Jesus Christ. This is a simple but very important principle that is stressed again and again in the New Testament. We must become a follower of Christ before we can think about being baptised.

Baptism is an important spiritual marker, but it does not make us Christians or automatically members of a worshipping community. Our hope is that baptism will be one step in your journey with Jesus and that your time at Central Vineyard will be one where you grow and thrive in your faith.



## Considering carefully

When we baptise people, we ask them the following three questions:

- **Do you confess Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Saviour?**
- **Do you turn away from everything you know to be wrong or sinful?**
- **Do you promise to follow Jesus Christ all the days of your life?**

If you are unable to honestly answer 'yes' to all of these questions, then please speak to us before putting yourself forward for baptism.



## Why get baptised?

In baptism, we identify with Jesus in his three great acts that made us alive to God: His death, His burial and His resurrection. Paul sums up the Christian message by linking these all together.

Christ died for our sins... he was buried... He was raised on the third day... 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

### INTO THE WATER. DEATH

As we go down into the water, we are saying in effect, that just as Jesus Christ died for our sin on the cross, so we have died to sin in our lives. Following Jesus is about laying down our lives so we can come alive to God's purpose for us.

*..count yourselves as dead to sin...*

Romans 6:11

### UNDER THE WATER: BURIAL

A dead person must be buried. Just as Jesus was buried in the tomb, so when we are lowered beneath the water our past lives are regarded as being over, put out of sight.

*[we are] buried with him through baptism*

Romans 6:4

### OUT OF THE WATER: RESURRECTION

Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of God. We are lifted from the water to live a new, distinctive life in Jesus.

*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.*

Galatians 2:20



## Preparing spiritually

Baptism is often a very special moment for a follower of Jesus when they get to make a public declaration of their faith in front of their family and community by doing something Jesus himself did at the beginning of his earthly ministry.

In the weeks leading up to your baptism, you could read slowly through one of the Gospels or follow a devotional plan to connect you afresh with Jesus and what he has done for you.

It's also wise to consider asking other people to pray for you in the run-up to your baptism - perhaps your family, members of your community, or others you can trust and who love you and Jesus. Be specific and as honest as you can in your prayer requests.



## Inviting people along

Your baptism is a wonderful opportunity to invite everyone you know to celebrate with you and to see something of your faith. Your family, friends, and colleagues are all welcome to come along to church at any time, but especially at your baptism. You may be surprised at how many people will be interested in your story, respect your decision and want to support you! Please let us know (at least roughly!) how many guests you expect to bring along to your baptism, so we can prepare the welcome team and reserve seating for them with a good view of the baptistery.



## Who will baptise me?

Usually, one of our leadership team will be in the water to baptise you and to ask you the baptism questions (see previous page). For safety, we like to have two people with you. You may like to ask someone else to be with you, perhaps someone who has been significant in your story of coming to know Jesus, we are happy for them to help baptise you, but we usually ask them to be committed to Central Vineyard. We will need to know who they are before the day, and they will need to bring a change of clothes and a towel (as will you!).

If you don't have someone to ask, one of our leaders will be very happy to baptise you.

You may also like to have someone meet you from the pool with your towel - alternatively, you can leave it at the side of the stage to pick up.



## What do I wear?

Please do not wear white clothing, as it becomes transparent when wet! Women are usually best off wearing a swimsuit under their normal clothing. Trousers, leggings or shorts and a dark-coloured t-shirt work well: skirts have a tendency to float. Men are best not to wear tight swim shorts, instead wearing loose trousers or shorts and a dark-coloured t-shirt. You'll need a towel and a change of clothes. We will show you to a private space where you can get changed before and after.

**Please remember to bring a towel and a spare change of clothes.**



## What should I do in the pool?

The water is 'ambient', warm enough to be comfortable for a few minutes. You, and the person baptising you, will come up to the front when asked to do so by the service leader. If you would like to share a little bit of your story, please let us know beforehand. Once ready, you will be invited to get into the pool. The team member baptising you will then ask you the three questions on the previous page. Please answer 'yes' in a clear voice.

Please stand about a quarter of the way from the far end of the pool (far enough that you don't hit your head as you go backwards). Place your hands across your chest: this keeps your centre of gravity in the right place to easily bring you back up. If you want to, you can hold your nose closed. Those baptising you will then place one hand on your crossed arms and one hand on your back, gently pushing you back into the water and up again. It is an unusual feeling to be taken underwater by other people, and it can feel strange. Please relax at this point and let the people baptising you gently push you under and bring you up again - this won't take more than a second or two.

Once you are done, you are free to either watch others being Baptised or get changed right away.



**If you have any further questions, please do let us know. We'd love to chat further with you.**